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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KHLS](#) [SMIG](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: HAITI: LAVALAS PARTISANS SEEK RE-EMPLOYMENT

11. (U) This document is sensitive but unclassified - protect accordingly.

12. (SBU) Summary. According to press reports, militant Lavalas partisans have threatened to recommence armed violence after July 9 if the Preval government does not reinstate them to jobs in government ministries and public utilities. The Minister of Parliamentary Relations has stated that the government will not allow bandits and gang members to force their return into government employment and Preval has underscored that he would not countenance creation of "unproductive employment." Preval and the Minister have also discussed publicly a commission to study the issue. It is unclear whether Lavalas supporters would have the ability to follow through on their reported threat; recent Lavalas demonstrations have fallen flat. End Summary.

13. (U) Local press reports that militant Lavalas supporters claim they will launch &Operation Baghdad II8 if they are not re-employed by the ministries and the government-owned utilities, from which they were fired after Aristide's departure. (Note: Operation Baghdad was a series of violent attacks in which several HNP officers were beheaded and burned and many civilians killed by militant Lavalas supporters over several months, beginning in September 2004. End Note.) On Monday, July 3, news reports indicated that approximately one hundred former employees from various ministries and public utilities gathered in Port-au-Prince to make their demands and requested a response from President Preval. They threatened to take up arms if their demands continued to be ignored and gave a deadline to the administration: the World Cup's end on July 9. (Note: There have been numerous rumors in the city of possible unrest associated with the end of the World Cup, but no firm threat information is known to us.)

14. (U) Minister of Parliamentary Relations Joseph Jasmin announced a possible commission to study the issue of unjustified ousting of government employees but stated that &jobs by force would not be tolerated.8 Preval said publicly July 7 that he would not accede to any demands to create "unproductive employment."

15. (SBU) Under the Aristide administration, thousands of Lavalas supporters were employed in the ministries and government owned utilities. In return, many of these former

employees suppressed opposition to the regime and prevented anti-Aristide protests. According to the Embassy's FSN, based on open sources, the group that is threatening violence is approximately 300 in number and is reportedly well armed.

¶6. (SBU) This Lavalas threat occurs as other reports of street violence are increasing. On July 5, the HNP reported 9 kidnappings, up from 2 or 3 a day in the recent past. Reports of random gunfire have also increased since two weeks ago when MINUSTAH troops and HNP started receiving harassing fire in Cite Soleil and Cite Militaire areas. On the evening of July 6 and the morning of July 7, gunfire was again reported in several areas of Port-au-Prince with tire barricades being confirmed between Delmas 31 and 75. These developments prompted Preval to call an urgent meeting of his security team July 7.

¶7. (SBU) Comment. The militant Lavalas partisans have timed their warning to coincide with Preval's July 6 return to Haiti from abroad. Their threat of violence is a reminder to Preval and his government that there are those who are still discontented and a signal that for some his "honeymoon" is already over. A government commission is unlikely to appease the group as they are more interested in lining their pockets than accomplishing their announced goals of alleviating poverty and finding sustainable employment. Lavalas' capacity to follow through on any threat is questionable in view of its recent inability to organize successful protests.

End Comment.
SANDERSON